NewsRelease

National Aeronautics and
Space Administration

Langley Research Center
Hampton, Virginia 23681-2199

Kimberly W. Land
(757) 864-9885

For Release: Sept. 8, 2000

RELEASE: 00-068

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Understanding Hurricanes: Shaping Our Future

Each season, hurricanes cause social and economic impacts to our daily lives and influence our responses in protecting ourselves from these natural disasters. According to hurricane expert, Kerry Emanuel, these tropical cyclones, often catastrophic when they occur, can also help regulate the earth's climate.

Dr. Kerry A. Emanuel, professor of Earth, Atmospheric, and Planetary Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), will present "Recent Progress in Understanding Hurricanes" at a colloquium at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12, at NASA Langley's H.J.E. Reid Conference Center.

Media Briefing: A media briefing will be held at 3 p.m. at the H.J.E. Reid Conference Center, 14 Langley Blvd., at NASA Langley Research Center. Media who wish to attend should contact Kimberly Land at (757) 864-9885.

Emanuel will examine some of the most important hurricanes in American history and discuss their roles in our social and economic climates. He will give an overview of hurricane physics and some recent practical and theoretical developments in discovery of "hypercanes" and the theory that these storms were probably brought on by asteroid impacts and may have contributed to the extinction of the dinosaurs.

Formerly the director of MIT's Center for Meteorology and Oceanography, Emanuel's research interests include the dynamics and energetics of tropical cyclones and their genesis and steering, and cloud and water vapor feedback in the climate system. He received his bachelors in Earth Science and a doctorate in Meteorology, both from MIT. As an international authority on hurricanes, Emanuel has authored or co-authored over 85 scientific publications.

Note to Editors: NASA Langley Research Center has developed a new Global Positioning System (GPS) remote sensing system for use aboard NOAA Hurricane Hunter planes. Officials hope the GPS reflection system will improve storm track forecasting and provide support to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. Dr. Stephen Katzberg, from NASA Langley's Spacecraft and Sensor Branch, recently briefed NOAA staff at Florida's MacDill Air Force Base on the GPS flight instrument. Katzberg will be available to the media at the 3 p.m. briefing and immediately following the colloquium.

- end -